

Message Text

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PAGE 01 GABORO 03055 070750Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
-----076889 070752Z /11/45

O R 021330Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1176
INFO AMEMBASSY DARESSALAAM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 3055

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PRETORIA ADDED AS AN INFO ADDEE)

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV RH BC
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: THE VIEWS OF PRESIDENT KHAMA'S PRIVATE SECRETARY

1. UK HIGH COMMISSIONER TURNER AND I HAD AN OPPORTUNITY AT AN INFORMAL SOCIAL OCCASION NOVEMBER 30 TO DISCUSS RHODESIAN DEVELOPMENTS WITH JOE LEGWAILA, PRESIDENT KHAMA'S PRIVATE SECRETARY FOR POLITICAL MATTERS. HE HAS CONSISTENTLY BEEN BEST-INFORMED OF TOP GOB OFFICIALS ON RHODESIA AND IS BROUGHT IN FULLY ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS WHICH LEADS TURNER AND US TO BELIEVE HIS VIEWS REFLECT THOSE OF PRESIDENT KHAMA.

2. LEGWAILA'S COMMENTS WERE DIRECTED AT PATRIOTIC FRONT AND PRESIDENT KAUNDA. HE SAID HE COULD NOT BELIEVE THEIR PERSISTENCE IN REFUSING ELECTIONS AND THEIR FAILURE TO RECOGNIZED THAT SMITH CONCESSION OF ONE MAN, ONE VOTE WAS IMPORTANT. UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE IS "WHAT THE FIGHTING WAS ALL ABOUT",
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HE SAID AT ONE POINT; IT WAS NOT TO INSTALL ONE OR ANOTHER LEADER. ELECTIONS ARE THE ONLY FAIR MEANS OF ARBITRATING QUESTION OF WHO IS TO LEAD INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE. TO BE SURE, OTHER VITAL ISSUES WOULD HAVE TO BE RESOLVED; IN THE FIRST INSTANCE THE OFFER OF INTERNAL TALKS SHOULD BE EXTENDED TO INCLUDE THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, AND SERIOUS CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS REMAINED. BUT IF THE PRINCIPLE

OF ADULT SUFFRAGE HAS IN FACT BEEN CONCEDED, AND PF REFUSES OFFER TO TALK, THEN LEGWAILA WAS CONFIDENT FRONTLINE STATES WOULD NOT SUPPORT PF, E.G., THEY WOULD NOT PERMIT INSURGENTS TO OPERATE FROM THEIR TERRITORY AGAINST RHODESIA.

3. LEGWAILA WENT ON TO EXPRESS APPROVAL OF FONSEC DAVID OWEN'S "BALANCED, RESTRAINED" RESPONSE TO SMITH'S ANNOUNCEMENT AND SAID THIS APPEARED TO BE A TIME FOR WATCHFUL WAITING. TIME WOULD ALLOW THE PRESSURES ON KAUNDA FROM FRONTLINE STATES AND OTHERS TO SINK IN. DESPITE OUR SKEPTICAL QUESTIONING, LEGWAILA REAFFIRMED HIS CONFIDENCE THAT ALL FRONTLINE PRESIDENTS EXCEPT KAUNDA REMAIN COMMITTED TO ELECTIONS AND WOULD SEE THE IMPORTANCE OF ONE MAN, ONE VOTE. HE NOTED THAT MACHEL HAD BEEN "OUT IN FRONT" IN FAVORING ELECTIONS AT MAPUTO CONFERENCE; HE DID NOT THINK MACHEL COULD REVERSE HIMSELF ON THIS POINT.

5. IN LATER CONVERSATION SAME EVENING WITH EXTAFFMIN PERMSEC MPOTOKWANE, LATTER SAID GOB'S INFORMATION IS THAT KAUNDA IS REQUESTING FRONTLINE MEETING AND THAT NYERERE OPPOSES IT. MPOTOKWANE SURMISED THAT NYERERE'S ATTITUDE WAS DESIGNED TO LET KAUNDA COOL OFF BEFORE GIVING HIM FORUM TO GRACEFULLY RETREAT.

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6. COMMENT: MY UK COLLEAGUE UNDERSTANDABLY MUCH APPRECIATED LEGWAILA'S COMMENTS, ESPECIALLY HIS PRAISE FOR OWEN'S "RESTRAINED" REACTION, AND HAS NOT DOUBT HEADLINED THIS IN HIS REPORTING. LEGWAILA'S EMPHASIS ON IMPORTANCE OF ELECTIONS IS ENTIRELY CONSISTENT WITH GOB'S OVERALL APPROACH TO PROBLEMS, I.E., RESOLVE THEM BY DEMOCRATIC PEACEFUL MEANS, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE. THEY APPEAR TO BELIEVE THAT FRONTLINE COHESION AND SUPPORT FOR PRINCIPLE OF ELECTIONS IS SUFFICIENT TO OVERCOME A POWER-HUNGRY BUT DISUNITED PF AND ITS RESIDUAL SPONSORS. WE ARE BY NO MEANS SURE.
NORLAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESIDENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 02-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977GABOR003055
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770459-0219
Format: TEL
From: GABORONE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197712101/aaaadhue.tel
Line Count: 106
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 106314
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: THE VIEWS OF PRESIDENT KHAMA'S PRIVATE SECRETARY
TAGS: PDEV, RH, BC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/84dacefb-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009